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BOOK REVIEWS

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Recollections. By JOHN, VISCOUNT MORLEY. (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1917. Two volumes. Pp. x, 388; 382.)

Quite a series of reasons could be advanced, if necessary, to support the prediction that Viscount Morley's *Recollections*, must, for a generation to come or even longer, hold a unique place in the large and continually increasing library of English political biography and reminiscences. Lord Morley's career at Westminster, as its story is unfolded with much reserve in these pages, is without a parallel in the period from the days of the younger Pitt to those of Lloyd George. Then, in regard to the book itself, it stands in a class in which so far the entries are singularly few; for in the hundred and twenty-odd years from the revolution of 1688 to the beginning of the great war, only four British statesmen, who attained to world-wide fame, wrote and published their political recollections. Reminiscences of statesmen in the second class, and of private members of the house of commons, can be counted by the hundred. But as far as can be recalled, without reference to the catalog of a library, the statement may be ventured that Brougham, Malmesbury, Russell and Morley were the only statesmen of front rank who wrote their own recollections of the world of politics at Whitehall and Westminster.

Since Viscount Morley, in August, 1917, wrote the introduction to his *Recollections*, moreover, a new value and additional importance have accrued to them which even he could not then have fully foreseen. This new value is due to the great, almost startling, developments in the politics of the United Kingdom and in the politics of the British Empire, which have come since August, 1917. Four of these developments are in the realm of English politics. A fifth concerns India. There, according to the facts set forth in Mr. Lionel Curtis's recently published *Letters to the People of India on Responsible Government*, the

British government is confronted with a situation almost parallel to that which existed in the United Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada from 1841 onwards, when Baldwin and Lafontaine and their contemporaries of the Liberal or Radical party were demanding the establishment of responsible or parliamentary government.

The four developments in the United Kingdom which give a new interest to Lord Morley's *Recollections* all manifested themselves at the general election in December, 1918. Three of them were in train before the election; but it was the election that impelled the people of the United Kingdom to the discovery that these developments had taken place, and to question themselves seriously regarding them, as well as regarding the portentous development in India. The election made four new conditions obvious. The Nationalist party in Ireland is of the past. It has only seven representatives in the new house of commons. The Sinn Feiners elected seventy-three representatives to Westminster. They are in control of about five-sevenths of Ireland, and are demanding, not home rule, which from at least as early as 1874 to 1918 was the demand of the Nationalists, but independence of Great Britain so complete as to admit of the establishment of a republic in Ireland. Finally, the old Liberal party, for the present at any rate, is in as serious a plight as the Nationalist party. Its representation at Westminster, by the fortunes of the election of December, 1918, was reduced to twenty-eight. Mr. George Lambert is the only member of the Asquith party of both long service and prominence in the party who survived the election; and when the new parliament assembled, it was the Labor party, with its sixty-five members, that was recognized as the leading group in His Majesty's loyal opposition, and assigned to the benches immediately to the left of the Speaker's chair.

These new conditions give a new value to Lord Morley's *Recollections*. They will impel students of contemporary British politics to turn to them with new interest; and for several reasons. The term of Lord Morley's service at Westminster covers approximately the era of the Liberal party that so amazingly went to seed at the election in December. Its era began with the almost general movement of the Whigs to the Conservative party—the movement of 1881–1886—and ended with the defeat of Mr. Asquith and all the leaders of his party either by coalition candidates or by candidates of the Labor party. It would be useless to speculate on the future of the Liberal party. One fact, however, is obvious. The era in the history of the Liberal party which began with the almost complete merger of the Whigs of

the old territorial governing class families with the Conservatives ended in December, 1918, and it is this era of the Liberal party with which Lord Morley is concerned in most of his political as distinct from his literary recollections.

Furthermore, after Gladstone, no English statesman was more prominent in the movement for home rule than Lord Morley. He held only three cabinet offices. He was secretary for Ireland in the days of Gladstone; in the Liberal governments of the eight years that preceded the war he was long secretary of state for India; and his last office was lord president of the council. Much of these two volumes is devoted to Lord Morley's service at the Irish and India offices; and all that the volumes carry concerning Ireland and India has, as has already been indicated, a new value in view of what would seem to be the epochal developments of the last two years in both these countries. In biographies, memoirs, letters, or recollections of English statesmen long in the front rank, it is natural to hope to find some revelations of the working of the political machinery at Whitehall and Westminster. The revelations in Lord Morley's book of this character show how late in the life of Queen Victoria, the queen sought to impose in some matters her will on the premier. They also afford new evidence of the queen's hostility to Gladstone.

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English Leadership. English Readings in Modern History. An Essay, by J. N. LARNED, with an Introduction by WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT; The Geographic Factor in English History, by DONALD E. SMITH; English Contributions to Scientific Thought and the English Gift to World Literature, by GRACE F. CALDWELL. (Springfield, Mass.: C. A. Nichols Company. 1918. Pp. vii, 400.)

What may be described as the basis of *English Leadership*—a book to which, as will have been gleaned from the title, four writers contributed—is an essay written before the war by the late Mr. J. N. Larned, presenting the claims of the English people to the gratitude of a democratic world. Mr. Larned, with whom the study of history had been almost a passion, realized that before everything else, the English have been conspicuously the leaders in the political civilization of the world. Every notable feature of difference between the